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AUTHOR Hooghoff, Hans
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ABSTRACT

The aims, content, and organization of social and political education, which became a compulsory subject in the Netherlands in 1968, are examined. Part 1 discusses the methods and models used by the National Institute of Curriculum Development since it was established in 1975. One of its projects is to develop a common core curriculum for social and political education. The objectives and content of the new subject area, the focus of part 2, are based on the idea that man's thinking and acting are greatly influenced by society, but that he can still, for the most part, act autonomously and have impact on the circumstances of his life. The development of attitudes is emphasized. An existence-oriented approach stressing relevance and practicality is used. The six theme-areas emphasized are: education; house, home, and environment; work and leisure; technology and society; state and society; and international relations. Part 3 focuses on course organization, discussing how social and political education fits into the overall school curriculum and examining the central questions and didactic principles on which the curriculum is based, its process- and product-aims, and course evaluation. (RM)

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CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FOR SOCIAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION IN THE NETHERLANDS.

By: Hans Hooghoff, curriculum development specialist.
National Institute for Curriculum Development, Enschede, the Netherlands.

SO 015 444

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1. NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND THE PROJECT "MAATSCHAPPIJLEER".

1.1. Origin

The most junior member of the Dutch educational institutes is the SLO in Enschede, an organization established in 1975.
However, the origin of the SLO can be traced back to the nineteen sixties when developments in the various subjects traditionally taught in schools and in other fields, such as psychology and educational science, necessitated a complete re-thinking of existing curricula. Increasing attention was drawn towards the relationship between the differing schooltypes and the co-ordination of teaching programmes at the various educational levels (longitudinal curriculum planning).
The emphasis placed on the curriculum, shifted from being a mere description of the subject matter, towards an indication of the correlation between the curriculum and the larger framework: the correlation between curriculum, in relation to general and specific objectives, selection of subject matter, didactic procedures and all aspects of school organization.
In the sixties various activities in the field of curriculum development were started by numerous organizations, committees and work-groups. A clear overall plan for all these activities did not exist. There was no organization available to co-ordinate and integrate them into a concrete form. Consequently many unconnected parallel developments were in existence. This situation caused great confusion amongst school teachers.

After ample discussion, involving all kinds of educational organizations and the Ministry, and following several lengthy parliamentary debates, the National Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO) was born in January 1975.

1.2. The responsibilities of the SLO

The SLO was put in charge of the following main tasks:
- to devise models for curricula and teaching-learning packs for all educational organizations and institutions below university level;
- to endow research projects for curriculum research and development by, for instance, university institutes, aimed at specific subject matters;
- to give advice and co-ordinate in the field of curriculum development.

"To help schools by providing them with examples of curricula" - this could well be the motto illustrating the primary aims and responsibility of the SLO: the development of models for curricula.

1.3. Three principles

When the objectives of the SLO were being formulated, a great deal of attention was paid to the constitutional freedom regarding education in the Netherlands. Each and every school retains the right to apply its own ideas as to how the teaching-learning processes should be shaped. As a guarantee to this freedom of education, the SLO applied two direct principles to its work:
- the SLO only develops by application;
- the SLO develops models (examples).

As a further safeguard, and to guarantee the value and usefulness of SLO publications, a third principle is adhered to:
- development work is only carried out in close co-operation with the schools.

1.4. Methods

The methods employed by the SLO can best be described as follows: close co-operation with a limited number of schools in a development project with the aim to produce publications which can be useful as examples for a great number of schools. There are a few elements in this approach, which require further explanation.
Close co-operation with schools is an absolute stipulation for good curriculum development. The reasons are obvious. Whenever an institute wishes to develop something which can be employed in practical education, then it will have to be in constant contact with those who will implement the programme.

1.5. Useful model

The SLO model-publications must be of use to the teacher. They have to be completely clear and accessible. Not only that, but they have to reach out to a specific cadre, or framework, and, in particular, give examples as to how such a framework can best be completed by the school in question. This has to be completed with a complete background information packet, a description of the procedures to be followed and a picture of the experiences of other schools. It is only then that a model can actually serve as an example and stimulate schools to help themselves with their own curriculum development.

The SLO itself is an independent organization. The Minister of Education can present project requests to the SLO. It must be said, that he is making increasing use of this privilege. In most cases these requests are accompanied by additional funds, especially earmarked for the execution of the project in question. A recent example is a project on development education.
One of the tasks of the SLO is to co-ordinate curriculum development work. This co-ordination task sofar has resulted in intensive contacts with 1) other organizations in the support system; 2) colleges for teacher education; 3) research-centers; 4) universities; 5) organizations specialized in work with media (AV, radio, tv); 6) organizations like CEVNO (Centre for International Education), Amnesty International, Consumerassociation, educational publishers, development and co-operation organizations, social, political and religious institutions and so on.

1.6. The SLO models

The SLO takes a central position in the area of curriculum development in the Netherlands. This position implicitly runs the risk of developing SLO-curricula of a prescriptive nature. Avoiding this and allowing individual schools to give shape and content to their individual curricula; a right laid down in the Constitution; SLO provides models for curricula. Models containing examples (for teachers, civil servants, ministers etc.) of how curricula can be made or determined. Schools are free in determining whether and how they will use the models developed by SLO. The model concept has a central position in the SLO-statutes. Three kinds of models at three levels are being distinguished:

1. models at national level: common core curriculum;
2. models at schoollevel: school curriculum;
3. models at classroomlevel: teaching-learning packs.

1. Models for common core curricula.

At first sight publications in this area do hardly relate to the individual school and yet they are of major importance .
Publications here can have two functions:
a. they can advise the minister in taking policy decisions concerning the organization of education in a particular type of school, subjectarea or subject;
b. they can serve as source of inspiration for schools in their schoolcurriculum development.
The contents of modelpublications at this level is of a general nature. The publications only provide a global survey of principles, aims and subjectmatter for a certain type of school or subjectarea.

2. Models for schoolcurricula.

Modelpublications of this type have a more immediate relevance for the teacher. Schoolcurricula contain agreements as to how in a particular school work is being organized. They will be developed by the schoolteam as a whole.
SLO develops models for complete schoolcurricula and for parts: models for parts of a schoolcurriculum.
In this instance, for the sake of convenience, the term subjectcurriculum is being applied. A model for a subjectcurriculum can serve as an example for determining the curriculum for a separate subject.

3. Models for teaching-learning packs.

Modelpublications in this area are most tangible for teachers. They are meant for the day-to-day practice in the classroom and contain examples of lessons and concrete materials for both pupils and teachers. Such models are being developed in schoolpractice.
Publications of teaching-learning packs are experimental, small-scale and non-commercial. SLO cannot act as an educational publisher. Modelpublications at this level are meant to show teachers in what way certain parts of the school- or subjectcurriculum can be translated into concrete lessons.

The SLO-models are examples for schoolteams, policy-makers and individual teachers. In using them they can individualize the shape and content of their teaching. The ways followed will usually diverge. Each school is unique by a multiplicity of factors, differing from one school to another. Ideological or religious background, composition of the team, background of the pupils and the pedagogical climate are only a few of such factors, which determine the unique image of a school and per consequence its school- or subjectcurriculum.

1.7. The curriculum development project "maatschappijleer" for lbo/mavo

Within the Humanities department of SLO exists the projectgroup "maatschappijleer". This group is engaged in in the curriculum development since 1980 for this subject in schools for "lbo" (lower vocational education) and "mavo" (general secondary education) (12-16 year).
The application for this project had been submitted by the Dutch Association of Teachers in Maatschappijleer.
In August 1980 the SLO Board decided to carry out this national project.
In general terms the aims of the project can be defined as:

1. an advice for a common core curriculum maatschappijleer for lbo/mavo;
2. examples of a subjectcurriculum maatschappijleer for lbo/mavo;
3. experimental teaching-learning packs as examples for working out parts of the subjectcurriculum into lessonplans.

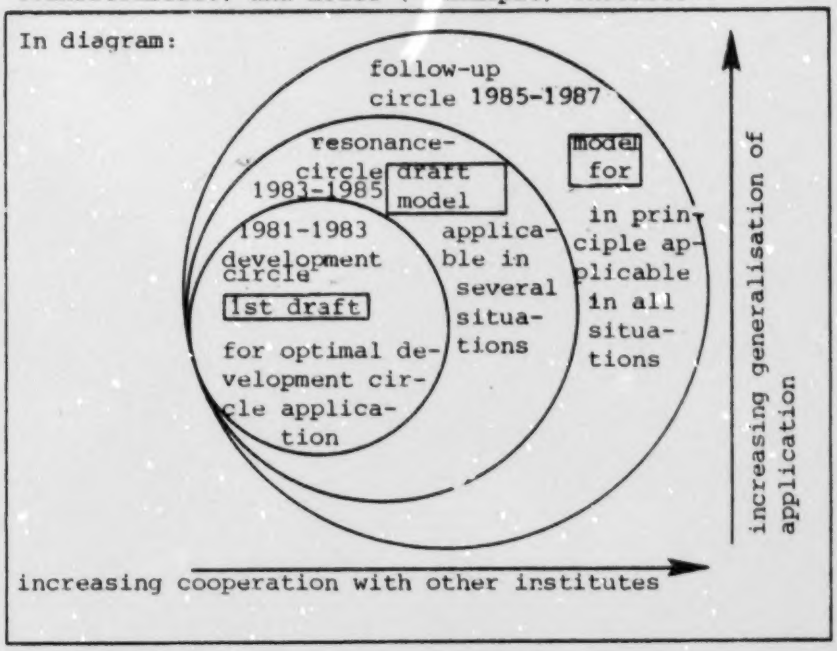
1.8. A close-to-school strategy

The Association of Teachers in Maatschappijleer in its application stressed the principle of close cooperation with teachers maatschappijleer in the execution of the national project. This desire coincided with SLO-principles.
In concerted action between teachers and projectgroup a development strategy was determined, within which teachers were to play a decisive role. The projectstrategy has three phases and with every phase a greater circle of teachers is being involved.

1. The development-phase with development circle.
2. The resonancephase with resonance circle.
3. The follow-up phase with follow-up circle.

These phases start one after the other with intervals of two and one year. At the beginning of the development-phase the emphasis is with developmentwork at classroom level with socalled development teachers. These teachers together with projectgroup form the development circle. The development circle produces the first project products in the form of "first drafts". These "first drafts" are handed on to the resonance-circle, which after two years is being formed around the development circle.
The development teachers remain part of the resonance circle and the "first drafts" are being tested for use-fulnes and adjusted till "draft models". These "draft models" will be tested by the follow-up circle for their transferability and model (= example) character.

In diagram:



1.9. Project-products

Through development-, resonance- and follow-up circle the results of the curriculum development activities will be turned into model- or examplepublications.
In line with the project aims three levels are to be distinguished. For practical reasons we discern four kinds of publications.

Core curriculum level	1. "View of..." papers regarding maatschappijleer
advice for a core curriculum maatschappijleer	
School level:	2. Reflections on specific aspects of maatschappijleer teaching
examples of subjectcurricula maatschappijleer or aspects of them	3. Guidelines for teachers maatschappijleer, based on theoretical publications mentioned above
Classroom level:	
experimental teaching-learning packs and entailing aspects	4. Examples of concrete, elaborate series of lessons on specific themes

Right to existence and applicability of the products will be tested, the outcome of the tests will be their legitimation. Next to teachers also policy determining and other institutions, like those out of the educational support system, will get involved.

2. A VIEW OF AIMS AND CONTENT OF MAATSCHAPPIJLEER.

2.1. *Developments since 1945*

With the introduction of the Secondary Education Act (1968) the subject maatschappijleer appeared on the time-table. Research has been done as to how a new subject managed to be timetabled in secondary education. Two different but parallel tendencies are usually distinguished, the one affecting the other, both being of great influence:

a. the gigantic developments of technology and science, causing deep changes in society and contributing to the growing complexity of it;
b. a strong movement for renewal, as reaction to the experience of World War II, having major impact on social and political thinking. A strive for democratization and humanisation of society was a result of this.

Various circles in society expressed wishes for an education that would be more responsive to changes in society.
Existing education was characterized as too intellectualistic, too individualistic and a far cry from reality. Education was in a need for more social and political relevance in order to properly fulfill its task in preparing young people for life in a fast changing and highly complicated society. The need for political education within the schoolsystem was closely related to this. To improve social and political relevance of education would contribute to an education that would sustain a society worth to live in.

In 1968 maatschappijleer appears on the timetable as a separate subject for all schools in secondary education. The Dutch school system was confronted with the complex problem of giving shape and content to a social subject, for which no definition existed and which had to occupy a position next to geography, history and economics. Maatschappijleer then becomes a compulsory subject in the last two years of secondary education but without final exams. The subject's task was in one way or other to prepare pupils for their social and political life. By definition the subject would offer a socially and politically relevant education.
Questions like principles, aims and subjectmatter have been objects of fierce discussions and diverging opinions for years.

Consensus on aims and content of maatschappijleer

Meanwhile a number of developments took place both in education practice and at the level of the authorities which brought about a certain consensus on nature and function of the subject.
This consensus is to be found in the View of Maatschappijleer, published in December 1981 by the SLO-projectgroup maatschappijleer. By the end of 1983 this View had been legitimized by Colleges of Education, Universities, Teachers' Unions and interested individuals.
Before getting to the main points of this View we need to briefly reflect on the projectgroup's view on man, society and education.

2.2. *A view on individual and society*

Fundamental to the determination of aims and content of maatschappijleerteaching is our idea that man's thinking and acting is greatly influenced by society, but yet that he can, for an essential part, act autonomously and have impact on the circumstances of his life. Man can make choices for himself. Although such choices are influenced by society they are not exclusively determined by it. This opportunity to make choices independently can be both respected and stimulated, in spite of the fact that the way man perceives society is greatly influenced by his education within that society. Still we can state that man will perceive society through individual perceptions, experiences and interpretations.
People do not live in or with abstract structures, they live in real situations. People don't live in "society", they live in houses, with relatives, friends, in groups, alone, in a neighbourhood. They work with colleagues in a storehouse or a school. In this type of real everyday situations people act and make choices.
The circumstances in which these choices are made are socially and politically determined, e.g. these circumstances are determined by social and political forces. Our society has rules and institutions of its own. The whole of this societal fabric has its influence onto our small-scale interhuman relations. But yet every perception of the social reality has again an independent, very personal aspect.
Man is not just a responsive being, determined by a societal system and his instincts. Although social and political determination imply certain restrictions to our thinking and acting, this does not result in being deprived of autonomous, free choices.
From history we can learn that social and political institutions and structures can be changed in time by decisions taken by men at variance with current values and standards.
Between the extremes of social-political determination and freedom of choice there are possibilities for autonomous and free choices. This is an important principle for the organization of maatschappijleerteaching.
At the same time we prevent doom-thinking and offer pupils a perspective on opportunities in their social life.

2.3. Task and function of education

The schoolsystem is not an institution on its own within our society. It is inextricably tied to the economic situation, political circumstances and the social structure of society.
Through education the individual gets to know and accept existing social-economic and political situations. This happens through the family, the peergroup etcetera, through teaching it is deliberately being organized by professionals. Through education there is an adaptation to the current system of social rules and agreements. This is being planned in the formal curriculum and happens accidentally through the hidden curriculum.
To be aware of these facts is quite important for the organization of maatschappijleerteaching, since the socialisation function of education in a concentrated form is to be found in this subject.
This is not all that happens with the individual in the school. Man is not only at the mercy of social-political forces. Young people play an active role in the development of their personal identity. They make choices of their own and by doing so decide at least partially the development of their identity. Education can act as a stimulus, it can also work as a brake. In our opinion the school ought to stimulate the development of an individual identity.
Maatschappijleerteaching can contribute in helping young people to maintain their position in society without losing their individual identity. We try to avoid a behaviour of overadaptation or total-dissension and to encourage a behaviour of not only being a product but also a producer of the milieu.

2.4. Maatschappijleer: social and political education

Following our view of individual and society and looking at the functions of education in school we define maatschappijleer as social and political education, aimed at living together critically in a democratic and humane way.

Social education

Social education implies that pupils develop such knowledge, skills and attitudes as to enable them occupying a relatively independent position in social life. Here one can think of knowledge of and insight in social institutions and processes, of skills like discussion, cooperation, empathy, listening, taking a stand and developing attitudes like solidarity, tolerance, self-esteem, service, self-management and respect.

Political education

Political education aims at the democratisation of all sectors of society. Political education attempts to make pupils aware of their personal and collective position and to develop skills for exerting influence. The development of knowledge, skills and attitudes is being stressed in order to have individuals acquire insight in their interests and those of others aimed at defending and promoting those.

Social and political education

From the above it will be clear that social and political education are closely interlinked. A sharp distinction is hard to make. It depends on whether one stresses the social or the political aspects of society. The emphasis of this type of education is on the development of a critical attitude, enabling pupils to know and discern social and political problems, processes and structures. Social and political education aims at making the self-evidence of our society less self-evident. It stimulates the reflection on the foundations of societal questions at large- and small-scale, without offering instant solutions. Social and political education stimulates the taking of a personal stand and an involved parttaking in society, where necessary aimed at a change of mentality and organisational structures.

In current maatschappijleerteaching only a beginning of social and political education is to be expected.
A first limited social-political orientation; a first confrontation with social-politically determined attitudes, opinions and behaviour and a first reconnaissance of opportunities of choice.
In this awareness we opt for the treatment of controversial problems, that evidently are of social-political interest.
Maatschappijleerteaching is not in first instance aiming at transfer of knowledge and reproduction of knowledge (imitation). It first of all aims at discerning and analysing social-political questions and at reflecting on personal choices based on knowledge of processes and phenomena (identification).
In maatschappijleer we deal with the following questions:
- What is a social-political problem?
- What is our relation to the problem?
- Why is it a problem?
- Which are the causes of the problem?
- Which are its possible solutions?
- Which solution has your preference?

The above principles and reflections bring about the following general aims of maatschappijleerteaching for lbo and mavo.

1. Maatschappijleerteaching stimulates pupils to taking independent stands and/or to making choices, concerning social and political phenomena and problems as far as they apply to their present and potential future position in life.

2. Maatschappijleerteaching aims at providing pupils with knowledge of and insight in social and political phenomena and problems as far as this applies to their present and potential future position in life.

3. Maatschappijleerteaching stimulates pupils to independently acquire, incorporate and apply information, which can be of interest to their present and potential future position in life.

4. Maatschappijleerteaching aims at providing pupils with knowledge of and insight in social and political phenomena and problems of modern society.

In summary:

Maatschappijleer aims at:
to have pupils acquire a critical and creative way of dealing with social and political phenomena and problems based on relevant and valid information.

2.5 *An existence-oriented approach*

An important question now remains:
how to enlarge, deepen and broaden pupils' understanding of society and their own position within, as to get to the viewed goal as close as possible?

A variety of approaches is possible:

1. In the time available we transfer as much knowledge as possible, which has been deduced from sciences and tuned to the level of the pupils (sciences central).
2. To transfer knowledge and develop skills based on a clear perception of society (society central).
3. Only knowledge is transferred and skills developed that have the interest of the pupils and is wanted by them (pupil central).
4. To transfer such knowledge and develop such skills as are of practical importance for the present and future social-political position of the pupils. Scientific knowledge and methods will only be applied if their usefulness in solving social and policital problems is evident.
   In selecting subjectmatter pupils' interest and ability are taken in account strongly.

From the above it will be clear that to the last option — the existence-oriented approach of maatschappijleerteaching — preference is given. This approach combines the adventages of the three others where as emphasis is given to the present and future life of our pupils. Through an existence-oriented approach we want to equip and prepare pupils for dealing with social and political phenomena and problems they may encounter in their (future) life.
This implies that aims and content of our maatschappijleerteaching has been selected and elaborated in correspondance with their life and experiences. The concrete subjectmatter has to be selected in perspective of the pupils' present and future life.
The subjectmatter has to be presented in a for pupils recognizable and relevant context: in themes.
In daily practice pupils ought to be able to apply what they learn In this way we encourage their social and policital involvement and their personal identity.
This is being supported by offering a variety of ways of learning, as to suit both the more practical and the more academic pupils.
Learning through identification is being encouraged, learning through imitation is being limited.
Maatschappijleerteaching will allow and encourage pupils' initiatives and where possible pay attention to current affairs. Thus the critical attitude and creativity are stimulated, whereas the coherence and complexity of social-political issues are clarified and stressed.

2.6 *Themeareas as framework for subjectcontent*

The knowledge, to be transferred by the subject maatschappijleer, is in our concept of teaching, not to be deduced from one or more scientific disciplines. The scientific knowledge, founded on the subject's primary sciences

(politicology, sociology, cultural anthropology) serves to support and legitimize the aims we wish to achieve. The theme-areas have not been selected at random but after ample comparison of methods and curricula from in- and outside the country.
The major selection-criteria are: the aims, learning and development psychology, youthsociology and socialisation-theories.
Here we are concerned with a concrete arrangement of daily reality for the teaching-situation. The purpose of these theme-areas is to achieve greater uniformity for teaching maatschappijleer in the Netherlands.
A theme-area is a framework for mapping out social and political problems and phenomena (linked to daily life experience) which can be recognized and viewed in their interlinking relations.
They involve areas of human life, in which man in relation to others is engaged in activities based on values and standards, supported by knowledge and skills in order to satisfy social and political needs.

Theme-areas have the following characteristics:
- theme-areas are wide-bodied. They take concepts from various disciplines in order to acquire insight in social and political phenomena and problems within this theme-area.
- social and policital phenomena are approached from diverging views of man, society and science.

Maatschappijleer is concerned with the following theme-areas:
Theme-area 1: Education
Theme-area 2: Home, house and environment
Theme-area 3: Labour and leisure
Theme-area 4: Technology and society
Theme-area 5: State and society
Theme-area 6: International relations

2.7. Selection of subject-matter and organization

It may be clear from the above that maatschappijleer through an existence-oriented approach tries to equip pupils to a conscious and critical social-political functioning.
We remain with the twofold problem of selection and organization of the subjectmatter.

2.8. A Thematic approach of social and political problems and phenomena

Based on what is said in 2.5 and 2.6 a thematic approach is put central in maatschappijleer.

> A theme is for pupils a recognizable learning-unit, within which social and political problems are put forward in a coherent context relevant and worthwhile for them.

The above difinition brings us to the following features of a theme:
- a theme links up with the life and living situation of the pupils; it contains (a) recognizable problem(s);

- a theme puts the problems forward in a meaningful context, so as to make the problems in concrete features digestable and to clarify the inter-relationship of the problems/phenomena concerned;
- a theme puts central a controversial area of problems that in the eyes of the teacher and pupils is important and relevant and which leaves room for a diversity of problem propositions;
- a theme offers the concrete framework for the acquisition of a number of social concepts regarded as relevant;
- a theme offers the opportunity for the treatment of current affairs;
- a theme provides an overview of the broad social fabric of which the proposed problems are part and parcel.

2.9. Social and political problems

Social and political issues are central to maatschappijleer. Here we mean issues (like the application of nuclear energy) which are being viewed as problems by people in their daily life. A social problem then is a critical position in and/or of society, Many individuals and organizations are involved with such problems: politicians, action groups, massmedia, those immediately affected, etcetera.
Social problems are not always political problems at the same time: what is viewed by those immediately affected, or what is seen by massmedia or trade-unions as a social problem, does not necessarily appear as such in the political process.
Opinions differ as to the solution on ground of diverging values and standards. These values and standards direct thinking and acting in the present and future society. Reflecting in the future has implications for todays actions, for instance in taking political decisions. Values and standards play an important role in judging social and political issues, so we speak of a normative orientation concerning these issues.
In approaching social problems emphasis is put on the solution of the problem: acting. The framework in which the problem is being approached is often of an instant and practicable and seldom of a scientific nature.
Scientific information and methods will only be applied if in practice they can contribute to the solution of social and political problems. If the sciences are applied it will be in a multidisciplinary way.
The solution of social problems is the result of a process of selection, which is essentially of a political nature and related to diverging interests and value-orientations. Such orientations are to be found in religious and ideological-political views, which have a signboardfunction for acting.

1. The information (subjectmatter) should have sufficient usefulness in "maatschappijleer". In other words: the information must provide a substantial contribution in achieving the forementioned aims and should fit into the framework of content.

2. The information (subjectmatter) should be valid. In other words: the information must be answered for scientifically. The social sciences have a role to play in guarding the validity of the information.

3. The information (subjectmatter) should be worthwhile for the pupils. The information has got to link in with the pupils' life and experiences, it should attract their interest.

The proces of developing an opinion could ideally speaking be as follows.
An originally unstructured opinion about a social issue is turned into a series of questions (problem propositions). Guided by these questions sources (among them social-scientific ones) are consulted. Facts and opinions need as much as possible to be distinguished.

At the end of the information-process a tentative opinion has to be assessed against generalised opinions (value-orientations) and tested on logic and consistency.
Finally a personal and structured opinion can be formed.

3. THE ORGANIZATION OF A SUBJECTCURRICULUM MAATSCHAPPIJLEER.

3.1 *The subjectcurriculum explained*

A subjectcurriculum is a part of a schoolcurriculum. The complete picture of a school is printed in a schoolcurriculum. It contains a description of all teaching aspects of a school: aims, methods, agreements on content and organization, involvement of pupils, the various subjects, etc.

The schoolcurriculum distinguishes:

A. The General Part; containing a description of items that concern the school as a whole;
B. The Specific Part; containing the subjects and their contents;
C. The Practice Part; containing a description of actual teaching per subject, per class/group.

A subjectcurriculum maatschappijleer is an elaboration of the Specific and Practice Part of a schoolcurriculum. We now try to explain the how and what of the subjectcurriculum maatschappijleer globally in some diagrams.

A subjectcurriculum maatschappijleer answers to the following questions:

1. Why and what for is maatschappijleer being learnt and taught?	The principles and general aims of the subject maatschappijleer.
2. What is being learnt and taught?	The subjectmatter relevant to the subject.
3. What methods?	The didactical principles determine the way of learning and teaching.
4. How are the teaching/learning results being judged?	Various kinds of tests and other means of judgment that are used during and after the teaching.

These parts have to be described as practical and clear as possible, in order to have an efficient survey for the planning of a subject for a number of years.
Hereafter a global description will follow of the way in which a subjectcurriculum can be elaborated. Here we are **neither concerned with a description** of methods nor of content of the subjectcurriculum. For examples of concrete and detailed descriptions of a subjectcurriculum we refer to other publications (see bibliography).

3.2. Why and what for is maatschappijleer being learnt and taught?

In answering this question we refer to principles and general aims of the subject.
We distinguish:

1. the principles
2. the central questions
3. the process- and product-aims.

principles

In this part of the subjectcurriculum we consider the choices fundamental to the curriculum. Chapter two of this paper provides an example. That chapter can work as a source of inspiration for the completion of this part of the subjectcurriculum.

the central questions

Maatschappijleer is emphasising the development of a personal identity.
We want to stimulate pupils in formulating their personal answers to social-political problems.
Taking a personal stand is being valued, also if the one deviates from the norm!
Aims cannot simply be termed in pupil-behaviour. This may be possible for aims in a specific job-training, but will be much more difficult for the training of a "future" citizen. Unless one would have a closed and one-sided concept of society. A concept which would allow room for a specific type of people.
Yet we want to specify our general aims. In doing so we have opted for a formulation in questions for pupils.
Questions that can be answered by the pupils themselves.
We deliberately want to remain open for deviations from the self-evident. Recognizing and respecting the opportunities for change.
To each part of a subjectcurriculum a central question can be formulated, which can than be expressed in sub-questions per lessons and series of lessons.
The central questions together make up the general aims of the subjectcurriculum and provide its outline.

Example of interrelated central questions as general aims for one academic year of maatschappijleer:

Block	Central questions
A	What are social and political problems?
B	How do we deal with social and political problems?

C	Where are our information sources; to what should we pay attention?
D	How can we arrive at an opinion of our own?

Example of an elaboration of question C in sub-questions:

Where do we find our sources of information; to what should we pay attention?
C1 What information sources do we know? C2 What is communication? C3 What deformation in communication can occur? C4 What is the difference between one-sided and more-sided information?

Process- and product-aims

Although we provided a global indication of the general aims of the subjectcurriculum maatschappijleer, classification on some points is needed.
It is reasonably easy to indicate what attitudes and skills we want pupils to develop in the longterm, without interfering with the principle of making independent choices. Here we mean the socalled process-aims, like:

- pupils can independently and in co-operation with others work on assignments;
- pupils can hold an opinion-forming conversation and show ability in logic reasoning;
- pupils can independently search for information in a library;
- etc.

Those process-aims, although based on the principles of maatschappijleer-teaching, have a validity beyond the subject.
They apply to the functioning of human beings in varying situations. The contribution to those aims by maatschappijleer-teaching can differ per pupil, in intensity and level.
Next to the process-aims we can discern the socalled product-aims. For the sake of convenience they have been left out the first part of the subjectcurriculum. Product-aims are defined in the Practice Part of the curriculum. They indicate what minimal knowledge and skills pupils ought to have in order to answer the central questions. These product-aims are being deduced from the central questions and subquestions and it has to be proved that all pupils have achieved them.
In other words: they can be tested and have both knowledge and skill aspects.

Example:
- pupils can name at least six types of employees involved in making a newspaper;
- pupils can distinguish from a list of functions in the

newspaperbusiness the staff and technical functions; - pupils can give examples of the way in which a message can be deformed before it is printed.

In the Specific Part of the subjectcurriculum the content of these product-aims are provided globally in the concepts and themes that are planned to be taught.

3.3. What is being taught and learnt in maatschappijleer?

Here we get to the description of the subjectmatter. Within this context we can only summarize the basic concepts and the themes.

1. Basic concept
2. Survey of themes

basic concept as foundation of the subjectmatter

Selecting subjectmatter through the principle of basic concepts needs a clarification and closer look at this aspect of the subjectcurriculum. By this we hope to contribute to improving the content of maatschappijleer. In founding the content of the subject on (basic)concepts we realize one of the conditions through which the subject can contribute to a stimulation of real intellectual growth with pupils.
Being able to deal with systems of ideas of growing complexity, at yet a higher level of abstraction is a characteristic of intellectual growth.

In order to improve the subject's content and to further real conceptformation, we need to know for the subjectcurriculum in general and for every lessonplan in particular, which concepts, individually and interlinked, we want to transfer.

Specific facts age and change quickly. Both Ausubel and Bruner have indicated that concepts of a general nature are more valuable in the selection and determination of subjectmatter than facts. One should be concerned with clarifying these concepts in order to provide subjectmatter with a sound basis. We need to be careful here, since there is a danger of having pupils learn by heart definitions of such concepts.
If, for instance, pupils only get to know the meaning of concepts like bias and manipulation through a definition and brief explanation by a teacher, without a deeper familiarization with the concrete features, neglecting the emotional colouring of those concepts, than verbalism is being encouraged.
One-sided intellectualistically oriented teaching will lead to phraseology in discussions or to aversion from the social and political surroundings. To prevent this from happening abstract concepts have to be brought to life through concrete features. Both subjectmatter and methods play a major and determining role here.
At this point our assumption is based on our growing knowledge of the course of cognitive (teaching and learning) processes. It is important to let the subject-

matter be "in tune" with the way our pupils learn and think. In order to do so, we need to have a clear picture of the structure of concepts of the information to be transferred. This structure can be provided (for certain subjects) by a scientific discipline which is hierarchically ordered from concrete features to very abstract ideas. Such structures of concepts are in a way pyramidally shaped.
For maatschappijleer however this in not the case. In the first place since the scientific support does not come from one discipline, but from a number, like: sociology, cultural anthropology, politicology, law, philisophy, history and social psychology.
Secondly because of the existence-oriented character of the subject. Still it is possible to select basis concepts in an existence-oriented way; those concepts and their subconcepts, related to the theme-areas, make up the basis for the subjectmatter selection.

3.4 How is maatschappijleer being taught and learnt?

In answering this question we are concerned with the description the didactical climate or the didactical context in which maatschappijleer-teaching will take place. A number of basic rules can be formulated here.

The didactical principles.

Those determine whether the teaching will be frontal, written exams are taken, or whether the teaching will be completely individualised by means of an ingenious assignmentsystem.
Didactical principles determine the selection of methods and means (materials, resources).
The maatschappijleerproject has opted principally for a certain way of teaching and learning. This choice however leaves ample room for manoevering by individual teachers. The choice implies the application of a series of clearly defined principles.

It is assumed that no person has a process of learning identical to another person.
A class of pupils has an equal number of ways of learning. Our teaching needs to be aware of this fact and taking it in account can improve the quality of the teaching. A difficult task but feasible. To allow for a variety of learning-ways presupposes a classroom situation with a good deal of variety as well.
Diversity in methods is important as is the creation of a climate that is inviting pupils to participate, to question, etcetera.
In determining our didactical context we base ourselves on a number of didactic principles.
Those principles have been derived from the knowledge gained by sciences like psychology and biology, for instance about the functioning of the human brain, the course of thinking- and learning processes, the interactive influence of human beings, etcetera.

Application of those principles in shaping the lessons can improve considerably the quality of our teaching. They stimulate the learning of the kids entrusted to us and they make learning enjoyable.
These didactical principles determine the course, shape and organization of the teaching-learning process and indicate in what way the learning of children can be activated, maintained and directed.

The learning of children can be encouraged through:

Didactical principles

1. Building the substance of the lesson(s) around a structure of concepts. Based on very concrete examples the transfer and formation of those (inter-related) concepts will be achieved, step by step. This implies that the teacher needs to have a clear picture of those concepts, since they do determine the selection of subjectmatter, the discussion in class, selection of films, slides, articles, etcetera.

2. Structuring and organizing the subjectmatter properly. The teacher uses the concepts as a guide in selecting, structuring and organizing the subjectmatter. The subjectmatter should contain a good number of examples that are familiar to the pupils' life and experience. In this way complicated concepts can be made intelligible for kids. By structuring the subjectmatter one precludes jumping from one subject to another during the lesson. It also prevents too hasty and too big strides to too high a level of abstraction.

3. Pupils' expectations should be in tune with the substance of the lesson(s). People behave very differently vis-à-vis information. They are in no way neutral or passive in confronting incoming information, on the contrary, they pay attention to some aspects while they leave out others.
The way in which information is viewed depends heavily on the circumstances in which it is being received by or offered to the individual. These circumstances can be controlled to a certain extent. In other words: the attention of the individual can deliberately be turned towards the most important aspects of the information offered. One uses here what is called "set". The individual is being "set" to the information one wishes to transfer. The implication here is that the teacher ought to clarify what each lesson is about in advance. This will enhance the effect of learning. This can be done by presenting the objective of each lesson to the class, formulated in a question for the pupils. The keeping of a logbook may also further the tuning in (setting) of the pupils. One can pick up the thread dropped last time and clarify the connection with the previous lesson (the previous pupils' question).

The above principles apply to every lesson. Out of the following a selection can be made depending on situation and need.

4. Pupils will be given the opportunity to learn (acquire) completely new concepts from concrete to abstract. There we recognize three phases:

   - we deal with concrete features of the concept, for instance we know how to drive a car, how to jump; we know things through action;
   - we discover a similarity in a number of concrete experiences (actions), we can describe this similarity through concrete examples (images), this is knowing through imagery;
   - then we are able to abstract similarities in our experiences into an idea, a concept. We can name this idea. We are symbolizing. For instance: we have classified a number of our experiences, based on intrinsic (essential) similarities and we call it indoctrination. We are in a position to distinguish this concept from other forms of influence.

   In acquiring completely new concepts the learning-process in a class can be organized in those three phases.

5. Pupils are being stimulated to be self-active. To make inquiries, do research, solve problems on their own, to carry out assignments, all this will enhance the involvement of the pupils, because they are given the opportunity to have many experiences.

6. Audiovisual material will be used in an informative way as much as possible. Films, slides, video-productions can be used, accompanied by directed assignments, in such a way that pupils can trace the information themselves. Too often audiovisual material is used in an illustrating way. Pupils are consumers only and explanations are given before or after by the teacher.

7. We encourage pupils to guess for information. Instant solutions will not be given, pupils will have to think them up first.

8. Pupils will be stimulated to ask relevant questions themselves and search for the answers on their own.

9. We will have pupils compare diverging information on one and the same subject. This already happens when pupils start to compare in a discussion the various answers given to a question that the teacher has put forward.

10. We will clarify the subjectmatter by means of contrast.

11. Pupils will be given the opportunity to use their fantasy and their feelings. In doing so we recognize and stimulate the personal emotional colouring of the concept to be acquired.

12. We encourage pupils to make use of their intuition. In doing so we avoid a onesided analytical approach and give preference to inventiveness. Solutions found

through intuition have to be analysed afterwards.

13. Pupils will be stimulated in finding a solution to a problem to think both divergently and convergently. They will not look for one single solution first (converging), but several solutions are sought (diverging). In this way we encourage creative thinking.

14. We will have pupils formulate hypotheses and test them. This can only be done with older pupils.

15. The subjectmatter out of previous lessons will be repeated regularly in variation and through summaries. The growth of concepts is supported in this way. Keeping a logbook of the lessons (by each pupil) is a good application of this principle.

Finally: the application of the above principles does not exclude frontal teaching. A responsible and balanced application though will bring about a functional and effective teaching-learning situation.

3.5 How do we judge the results of maatschappijleerteaching?

Here we have to describe the kinds of tools and evaluation instruments that are to be used during or after the actual teaching.

Evaluation and testing.

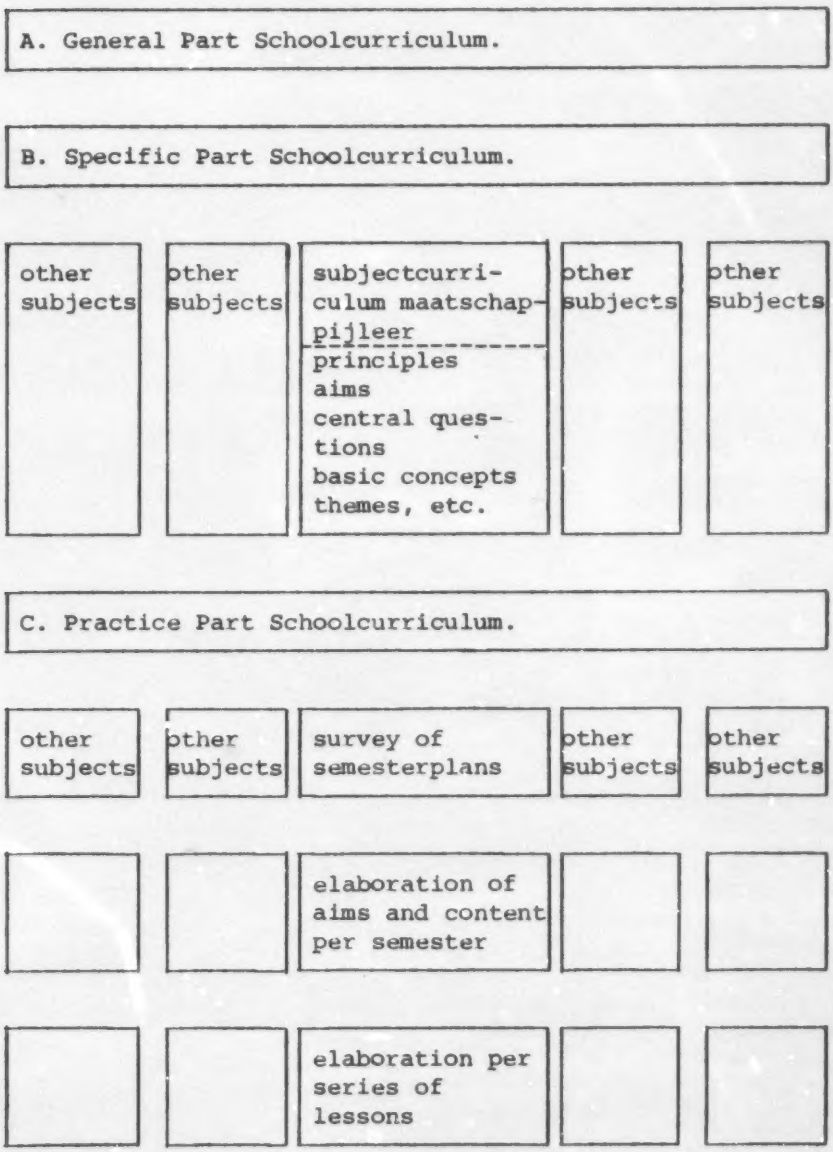
Evaluation and testing are directed by aims (formulated in questions), the process-aims and product-aims.
We are not interested in a mere reproduction of the subjectmatter. What has to be judged somehow is whether and to what extent real intellectual growth has occured.
In other words: the productive application of what has been learnt.
As we have seen questions are determining the direction of the teaching-learning process. The subjectmatter contains part of the answers. Another part has to be formulated by the pupil himself. In this way individual answers are coming forward.
One speaks of intellectual growth when acquired concepts in their interrelationship can be applied to new problems. This can only be judged in the long run.

The results of a series of lessons can be expressed in various ways:
- groupdiscussions;
- lectures;
- exhibitions or part of it;
- an article;
- a paneldiscussion;
- a written test;
- a wallpaper;

etcetera.

In cooperation with the pupils one can decide on criteria for evaluation. We prefer a diagnostic evaluation. What does a pupil need to further develop his/her learning? Were are the gaps, what can be done about them? Consequently the results will be used in the planning of the lessons to follow.

This chapter is finished with a diagram of the structure of a subjectcurriculum maatschappijleer, showing the position of the parts we described before.



This diagram can be elaborated in the following way.

A. General Part Schoolcurriculum.
0. Introduction. 1. Organisational information of the school. 2. Principles and aims of the school.

B. Specific Part Schoolcurriculum.
In which aims and principles have been elaborated in a recognizable way for the various subjects, like maatschappijleer.

The subjectcurriculum maatschappijleer.		
1. Formal description of maatschappijleer. Number of classes/groups, periods, teachers and qualifications, available media, budget, etcetera.		
2. Description of the subjectarea maatschappijleer.		
2.1.	Principles.	
2.2.	Central questions.	
2.3.	Proces-aims.	Product-aims.
2.4.	Basic concepts.	
2.5.	Survey of themes related to theme-areas.	
2.6.	Didactical principles.	
2.7.	Evaluation and testing.	

SUMMARY.

In 1968 "maatschappijleer" became a compulsory subject in Dutch (secondary) education. The emergence of the subject can be seen as the response to the call for a more social and political relevant education and partly as the outcome of the development of social sciences. After discussions and opinion-forming for many years a good deal of consensus has been achieved by most interested parties on aims and content of the subject. This consensus is formulated and published by SLO in the 1981 paper "View of Maatschappijleer".
This paper is based on a conception concerning the individual, society and education which emphatically allows for individual choices in spite of a great deal of social-political determination of human behaviour.
Maatschappijleer in this view is to be seen as social and political education in which the development of knowledge and skills is subordinate to the development of attitudes.
The aim of an existence-oriented approach is: to deal with social and political phenomena and problems in a critical and creative manner based on valid and relevant information. The framework of the subject-content for thematic education is formed by six theme-areas: Education; House, home and environment; Work and Leisure; Technology and Society; State and Society; International relations.

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